

Washington, DC - The U.S. House of Representatives today passed H.R. 1520, cosponsored by Rep. Peter Welch, establishing the Champlain Quadricentennial Commemoration Commission to support activities and programming in recognition of Samuel de Champlain's discovery and exploration of Lake Champlain. The 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his discovery will be celebrated in 2009.

"Champlain's discovery served as a milestone in the development of early America. Lake Champlain continues to play a key role in Vermont's economy and our way of life," said Welch. "This legislation ensures that the significance of Champlain's discovery will be appropriately commemorated."

The Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial Commemoration Act of 2007 authorizes \$500,000 over the next five years to establish the commission, which will award grants to communities, non-profit organizations, and local governments. These grants are designed to promote understanding and appreciation of Champlain's historic accomplishment. The legislation also directs the commission to work in conjunction with the Lake Champlain Basin Program, which protects the Lake by coordinating the efforts of federal, state, provincial and local governments in Vermont, New York and Quebec.

"It is a moral imperative to preserve our natural world for future generations, and the Champlain Commemoration Commission will do that by supporting the continuing efforts of the Lake Champlain Basin Program," said Welch.

The Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Commemoration Act of 2007 also establishes a commission to recognize the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the voyage of Henry Hudson, the first European to sail up the Hudson River, and the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the commercialization of steam navigation by Robert Fulton.

H.R. 1520 passed by a voice vote.